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Docket No.: KKH-0028
(PATENT)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:
Yoji Mizutani et al.

Application No.: 10/617,812

Confirmation No.: 4175

Filed: July 14, 2003

Art Unit: 1762

For: SUBSTRATE PROCESSING METHOD
AND SUBSTRATE PROCESSING
APPARATUS

Examiner: K. A. Moore

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION / ELECTION OF SPECIES REQUIREMENT

Mail Stop Amendment

Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Restriction / Election of Species Requirement dated February 7, 2006 (Paper/Date No.: 0206), Applicants provisionally elect Species I, Figure 1, with traverse. It is respectfully submitted that claims 19-29 read on the elected species.

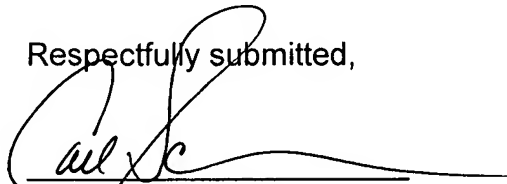
It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of all claims is sufficiently related that a thorough search of the subject matter of any one group of claims would necessarily encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP 803 which is stated that "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims that are distinct or independent inventions" (emphasis added).

It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply to the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and the duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

Further, Applicants respectfully request rejoinder of the claims to the application. In the event the claims are not rejoined to the application, Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application encompassing the non-elected claims.

Date: March 6, 2006

Respectfully submitted,



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